



Herman Melville

Benito Cereno

by Herman Melville (1819-1891)

On an island off the coast of Chile, Captain Amaso Delano, sailing an American sealer, sees the San Dominick, a Spanish slave ship, in obvious distress. Capt. Delano boards the San Dominick, providing needed supplies, and tries to learn from her aloof and disturbed captain, Benito Cereno, the story of how this ship came to be where she is. Dealing with racism, the slave trade, madness, the tension between representation and reality, and featuring at least one unreliable narrator, Melville's novella has both captivated and frustrated critics for decades.



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